

Maryland Port Administration

PRESS RELEASE

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LOCAL WORKERS LEARN THE ROPES AT TENTH ANNUAL RO/RO RODEO

Event brings cargo handlers, Ro/Ro manufacturers, steamship lines and gigantic, big-ticket Ro/Ro equipment together for training experience

BALTIMORE, MD (May 11 2005) – More than 200 new workers at the Port of Baltimore participated this week in the eighth Ro/Ro Rodeo, a driver training exercise at the Port's Dundalk Marine Terminal. For two days, members of the International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) Local 333 received hands-on training in maneuvering and operating the variety of Roll-on/Roll-off, or Ro/Ro, cargo that comes into the Port. Sponsored each year by the Steamship Trade Association (STA), Maryland Port Administration (MPA) and ILA, this event is the cornerstone of the Port's white glove handling and superior Ro/Ro service.

In addition to staff from the MPA, ILA, STA, and various steamship lines, leading Ro/Ro manufacturers also participated in the event by explaining operating procedures and answering questions about the vehicles. To gain a better knowledge of safe handling techniques and changes and upgrades to existing and new equipment, ILA members participated in a variety of exercises, including lashing, auto handling and an equipment-training course. This year's Rodeo showcased tractors, backhoes, combines and other equipment from CNH, Deere & Co., Fendt, AGCO, Massey Ferguson, and JLG and automobiles made by Chrysler, Mercedes-Benz and Toyota.

For the last decade, the Port of Baltimore has remained the dominant Ro/Ro port on the East Coast – with nearly 50 percent of the market share. In order to maintain its status, the Port continues to add new Ro/Ro carriers, services and terminals and prides itself on having one of the lowest Ro/Ro cargo damage rates in the country.

The Rodeo was developed as a spin-off of the Port's Total Quality program, which was started several years ago to ensure the safe and damage-free handling of automobiles and other Ro/Ro cargo. It is one of the Port's many quality improvement programs.

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